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and the display and report a detected failure of one or more of the diagnostic tests, said processor operative to perform said diagnostic tests and report the detected failure independent of a status request transmitted to the electronic price label from a central computer.

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6. (Twice amended) An electronic price label system for use in a retail establishment comprising:

- a central processor for maintaining price and other information relating to a plurality of retail items; and
- a plurality of labels operative to communicate with the central processor, the labels being operative to display information based on information received from the central processor, each of the labels being operative to perform an internal self-diagnostic test independent of a status request issued by the central processor, and provide an alert or indication reporting failure of the self-diagnostic test.

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11. (Twice amended) A method of self-diagnosis of failures in an electronic price display system, comprising the steps of:

- establishing communication between a central processor and a plurality of electronic price labels;
- periodically performing a self-diagnostic test on each of the electronic price labels independent of a status request issued by the central processor;
- reporting each fault detected by the self-diagnostic test to the central processor if the detected fault does not preclude accurate reporting of the fault; and
- providing an error indication if the detected fault precludes accurate reporting of the fault to the central processor.